International Students’ Emergency Fund

Guidance Notes for International and EU Students

1. What is the International Students’ Emergency Fund?

The International Students’ Emergency Fund (ISEF) can assist International and EU students in times of emergency or crisis. The Fund is small and cannot provide ongoing support or assistance with course-related or living costs (including tuition fees). Circumstances that may be considered for an award from ISEF are, for example, a family bereavement or illness that requires the student to return home immediately. Applicants to the ISEF are seen by the Student Funding Manager.

2. Am I eligible to apply?

The ISEF is intended for students who meet the following criteria:

- International or EU (for tuition fee purposes*)
- Full or part-time
- Fully enrolled on a course, or in extension (not limbo)
- Experiencing an unforeseen emergency situation that requires urgent financial support

You will need to show genuine financial hardship and that you have explored and exhausted all other ways of supporting yourself. The Fund is there to help eligible students who have particular financial needs but we cannot meet every application we receive and we cannot always meet the costs that you might apply for. Priority is given to students with dependants or disabilities.

Applications cannot be considered from students who have completed, permanently withdrawn from or abandoned their course, or from students who are in limbo.

*If you are unsure about this, please contact the Student Funding team who will be able to clarify if you are an International or EU student for tuition fee purposes: studentfunding@warwick.ac.uk

3. I am temporarily withdrawn from my studies. Can I apply?

If you are an International or EU student (for tuition fee purposes) and unable to attend your course due to ill health, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances, you can apply for help from the Fund. Awards can be paid if you have not permanently withdrawn from or abandoned your course, and you intend to return to your studies.

4. What help can I expect to receive?

Grants from the Fund are needs-related and assessed on an individual basis. As a result, we are unable to give a clear indication of the likely value of any possible award until an application has been submitted and the assessment process completed. Grants from ISEF do not need to be paid back.
5. How do I apply?

An application form can be downloaded from http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/funding/hardshipfunds/isef/. Alternatively you can request a form from the Student Funding Office, Senate House. Once you have completed the form, you will need to return it to the Student Funding team along with the supporting documentation detailed within the form. Any receipts or invoices associated with the application must be on headed paper, dated and signed please. If possible, you will need to provide evidence of your emergency circumstance, along with documentation supporting the additional costs associated with it, for example, the cost of a flight.

6. I have completed the application form and enclosed the necessary documents. What happens next?

Once we have received your form and supporting documentation, the Student Funding team will contact you to arrange a short confidential interview with the Student Funding Manager which will take approximately 30 minutes. The interview will be informal and will give you the opportunity to discuss your individual needs and circumstances in detail. Please ensure you bring your University ID card to your appointment.

Please be assured that the Student Funding Manager will consider your best interests at all stages of the assessment process. However, you should be aware that the Funding Adviser works within University guidelines for the assessment of awards and distribution of funds. It may be necessary during the interview to refer to your bank statements, credit history and spending patterns. The discussion may also explore opportunities for part-time work and other funding that may be available to you. Any questions are not intended to be intrusive, but to allow the Student Funding Manager to form a complete and comprehensive assessment of your financial situation and, if possible, to recommend a successful outcome to your application.

7. What happens after the interview?

After your interview a short confidential report summarising your discussions will be prepared and your application will be assessed against the guidelines for the allocation of funds.

8. How will my application form be assessed?

The first step is to establish exactly why you are applying to the Fund. If the Student Funding Manager considers that the application meets the criteria of being in response to an unplanned and unforeseen financial crisis, an income and expenditure assessment is undertaken. Standardised figures are used for some parts of the assessment, for example, a standard ‘living cost’ is applied as reasonable expenditure on food and other basic living costs. You must demonstrate that you cannot meet the unexpected cost from your own resources. However, in exceptional circumstances, an award may be made on the recommendation of a senior member of University welfare staff without the need for an interview or separate income and expenditure assessment.

ISEF cannot help in cases where there is a need for ongoing maintenance support, e.g. where a parent or other sponsor has suddenly withdrawn funding or where promised funding has not materialised. Similarly, an award from ISEF would not be appropriate if you have not made adequate provision for your fees and living costs at the start of your course. An exception to this may be where a PhD student has been sponsored for 3 years of study but the sponsorship is withdrawn during a period of writing up. In these
circumstances, especially if the student has a disability or children living with him/her in the UK, the Student Funding Manager may use his or her discretion to recommend a contribution towards living costs.

ISEF may be used to help with childcare costs for pre-school age children if the International Students’ Childcare Remission Scheme is exhausted. The assessment and recommendation process is the same as for CCR applications.

Recommendations for awards from ISEF are approved by the Head of Student Finance or a second Student Funding Manager (recommendations are reviewed by a minimum of two members of staff). Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their application may appeal using the University’s Hardship Fund appeal procedure.

9. How and when will I find out if my application has been successful?

If your application form is completed accurately and the appropriate documentary evidence supplied, an assessment and decision should be made within 10 working days of your interview. You will be notified of the outcome by email. Any award will be paid within a further 10 working days (providing you have submitted your bank details on receipt of your email, if applicable). Please note payments may be made in instalments.

However, in some cases we may need to defer your initial assessment or payment beyond 10 days to deal with a particular circumstance, for example additional evidence or bank statements may be required. If this applies to your application, we will let you know the reason for the delay.

10. Will I get my original documents back?

Any original documentation you supplied as part of your application will be returned to the local University address on your student record (or you can arrange to pick them up from the Student Funding Office in Senate House). However, should you prefer to submit legible photocopies of your documents this is acceptable and these documents will not be returned to you unless requested. Please note that spreadsheets of bank transactions will not be accepted.

11. Can I reapply to ISEF?

Due to the nature of the Fund, it is unlikely that a student will need to reapply during the same academic year. However, should this occur, you will need to submit a new application form. You will need to provide evidence of your new emergency circumstance, and bank statements for the last 3 months (if your first application was within the last 3 months, you just need to provide bank statements from the date of your last appointment).

12. Appeals Procedure

Download the Hardship Funds Appeals Procedure

13. Who should I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions related to the International Student Emergency Fund, the application process or Student Funding in general, please do not hesitate to contact the Student Funding team on studentfunding@warwick.ac.uk, or by telephone on 024 7615 0096.